THE COMMONWEAL

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CONTENTS

The Spell of Prosperity 435
Week by Week 437
The World's Conscience 440
From Dadaism to Aquinas ... G. R. Garrett 441
Nathan Hale—the Beloved Spy ..... Edythe H. Browne 442
The Leaven (*verse*) .. Henry Longan Stuart 444
Monks and Monks ..... Thomas Walsh 444
Communications 446
Poems ..... Leo Markun, Marie Blake, Mavis McIntosh, Dorothy Haight, Clement Wood, Ruth E. Hopkins 447
The Play ..... R. Dana Skinner 448
Books ..... Landon M. Robinson, Muriel Kent, Walter V. Anderson, Robert Innes Center, H. L. S., T. C. 449
The Quiet Corner 453

THE SPELL OF PROSPERITY

INDUSTRY has put in the biggest year of its history. The federal Department of Commerce is proud of 1925, and unreservedly optimistic about the sum-total of 1926. Business pessimists have, in fact, adopted an adventistic practice of projecting the day of doom into the vague future.

Facts like the following are most impressive: building permits, for all types of structures, are more numerous than ever before, in spite of the astonishing amount of construction rushed through since the war; new—and sometimes very raw—suburban residential cities have been erected during short periods of time, so that throngs of salaried and wage-earning citizens may satisfy their craving and purchase homes; the automotive industry is stabilized to an extent which sends its better stocks soaring to unprecedented levels; the Baltimore and Ohio plan of labor management has been in successful operation for three years; and —most striking circumstance of all—the average well-paid workingman of 1924 turned out 25 percent more than did the comparatively poorly paid workingman of 1913. Nor does the tremendous buying which has buoyed up commerce seem to have dispelled thrift. Deposits in savings banks exceed $23,000,000; and, to take one example of the sums amassed under the cover of life-insurance, veterans of the United States deposited over $40,000,000 during the past year.

These facts speak for themselves, but it is difficult to conjure up from them an adequate vision of this tide of plenty we call prosperity. "To promote the general welfare," is, of course, a constitutional pledge. Distributed contentment is one of the objects of American life; and obviously the efforts made by municipal and federal rule in its behalf have been large, both in principle and practice. Sooner or later, a city with enough money to spend, can create parks and boulevards, establish cultural centres, wipe out flagrant crime, establish traffic order, and guarantee sanitation. Sanely levied bond-issues make possible civic improvements which are shared by each and every private individual, regardless of economic status. A recent distinguished French visitor to the United States marveled at the "order" of American living—the safety of crowded streets, the dependableness of schedules, the courtesy of industrial servants—and sought the explanation partly in the fact that there was abundant money to pay for all these things. He was right to a considerable extent. Wealth and service do go hand in hand. There is all the difference in the world between an organization which is driven,

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and an organization which is eager, or willing, to go.

Nevertheless, there is behind this façade of smoothly operating effect a definite national cause. Governing public opinion has not always attended satisfactorily to details, but it has insisted upon one important thing—it has not permitted the pendulum to swing too far either toward private initiative or toward communistic profit. Despite a grim and continuous debate, labor organizations have grown numerous and strong while property rights have been scrupulously respected. No dictatorial limit has been set either to the enterprise of capital or to the development of labor. The normal action of government has been merely to curb dangerous excrescences like trust-formations on the one hand, and radical communistic societies on the other. It is true that there has very likely been something like too great a concentration of wealth, and something like too complete a monopoly of skilled trades. But the mean between these extremes has clearly and obviously prevailed, so that the result is visible in an unparalleled distribution of wealth.

The American citizen has often maintained his conservatism in the face of odds. He then acted not so much reasonably, as instinctively, to preserve the delicate compromise between law and liberty which had been constituted his ideal of government. It is widely believed that this conservatism is malignant. Does it not produce a type frightened to death of "radical ideas," and content to haunt a philosophical groove? Well, we doubt very much if there is another country in the world where "causes" are so sure to get an enthusiastic hearing. Even the devotees of national cynicism have banded and grown strong. Theories of extraordinary violence are expounded with gusto and applauded wildly. "Getting ideas" is a fetish to which even the most hardened Rotarian succumbs. Comfortable complacency is forever seeking to perch itself above exploding dynamite. The really ironical thing about the "savage novelist" or the "volcanic philosopher" is that so many well nourished people are interested in him. As an adventure, the Eighteenth Amendment has thrilled thousands. In short, if there be a routine American type, nothing is so well calculated to upset it as the prosperity which allows flirtation with ideas and institutions. Where men are really working hard—as in Italy and England just now—they cling pretty firmly to their notions. Cincinnatus would probably not have been interested in Ezra Pound.

After all, there may be ideas which should remain as the stones in the fundament of our dwelling, instead of turning into marbles rolled about on the playground. Hypothetically, at least, Emerson's brave old phrase about the world having been built on ideas, is still worth considering as a principle in the national architecture. Now, if the financial balance of the year 1924 is so prepossessing, it is obviously because it is a balance of prosperity rather than of wealth. Workingmen, this time, were Oliver Twists who really got some more. The circumstance is not merely fortuitous. It was antedated by years of desperate struggling—years during which men and women, who lived close to the border-line of slavery, studied economic theory, grasped the purposes and methods of organization, and frequently fought for the right to live. On the whole, it is remarkable how firmly these groups of laborers and their leaders maintained their faith in American civic purpose; how consistently they trusted the ideal of distributed contentment. In spite of numberless errors in theory and tactics, they were the unforgettable facts which guided the national conscience in its attitude toward the rights of the poor and the curtailment of selfish economic power.

Now, under the spell of prosperity, it becomes easy to neglect the lessons of the past. Labor-unionism complains that its grip seems to have been weakened by a widespread feeling of security—of confidence in the sources of easy money. Why bear the burden of defensive organization when it is easier and more lucrative to join coöperative unions established by the employing companies, and ornamented with welfare tendencies? Why cling to the old, darkling, militant atmosphere of the federation with a grievance, when the keen, bright air of the successful company is so alluring? Well, why? If prosperity were a stable and certain thing, there would probably be no reason. It might then be imperative to relegate into the discard economic and social factors once useful to the life of the race, but now outgrown. But only the naïve will trust industry to the extent of believing it impervious to assault. When evil days come—as they surely will—what shall be our defense if we have broken clean with the efforts and principle of the past—if the antithesis between labor, legally organized in its own defense, and capital, legally protected in its holdings, no longer exists?

The danger is as great one way as another. Who can guarantee that during another cycle of depression and poor wages, of soup kitchens and unemployment, the development of the consciousness of labor will be as sane and constructive as it has been? The old unionists and their present successors share a faith in the American ideal; but no one can say that their followers, in a possible era of dissociated and chaotic labor, would do as much. Obviously, it is not part of the business of capital to protect the privileges of labor. It may do much when actuated by altruism or enlightened self-interest; but in times of stress it does the natural thing—it protects itself. And so we feel that any aggressive attack upon the structure of labor-unionism is calamitous because it undermines a compromise secured by long years of effort in consonance with a firmly rooted national principle. One cannot tamper with the basic social truth, even in times of prosperous play. The delectable leisure is not a mere gift of the gods.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

IF the seaworthiness of the League of Nations may be judged by its ability to weather heavy seas without foundering, that much-discussed body must be considered to have come through the past two weeks with success. The first and heaviest blow it encountered was, of course, the refusal of the United States to submit itself to the judgment of the International Court of Justice on questions where its interests and dignity are involved, and which would necessarily, be raised without its consent. The second was the withdrawal of Spain, following the example of Brazil, from representation in the League, as the result of the admission of Germany. Despite some protest on the "privileged position" which the now famous fifth reservation is considered to give this country, there is every indication that the difference will not be allowed to stand in the way of American participation in the work of the League by way of the Court. As regards the retirement of Spain and Brazil, there is a tendency to disregard, at least for the moment, the very ugly precedent it sets, and to feature the unconditional adhesion of Germany, so long delayed and so often threatened, as rich amends. Like the archiepiscopal chapter of Rheims, after the famous Curse, the League may, with some show of reason, present itself to the judgment of the world as not even "one penny the worse."

IT is pretty safe to prophesy that the Geneva body, after its latest buffeting, will be found running upon a more even keel. This will not be on account of any clever seamanship displayed by its officers and crew, but simply because the force of events has now ballasted it with a little rough and heavy common sense. To impartial observers, there was always something unreal in the avowed participation of the smaller powers on a basis of equality. Criticism in this country from any but League zealots has always taken the form that, under cover of a league for international justice, what was really being set up was a league for control. Like all departures from the actual, this discrepancy has been the source of endless misunderstandings and insincerities in the past. Much as one may regret the evaporation of idealism which is taking place, and which is evidenced by the dropping out of one minor power after another, there can be no doubt that the League will gain in efficient working when vital questions are raised by big brothers who are in a position to make their discontent felt by something more efficient than withdrawal. It is edifying to find such a light of liberalism and high thinking as the New York World, accepting the situation with the cynical comment that in the future, "the strongest battalions will decide the issue." But, as an epitaph upon one phase of the League's existence, which the entrance of Germany may be considered to have closed, the World's dictum has the merit of being closely in line with the frank and brutal truth.

THE official interview with President Coolidge obtained by Supreme Knight Flaherty and other representatives of the Knights of Columbus, was a wholly satisfactory affair. It must have reassured a sorely harassed State Department, even as it gratified all those who appreciate the work of the order and regret any serious mistake it might make. The atmosphere of the recent convention at which the Knights passed a rather vehement resolution, was not favorable to the deliberate consideration of a problem so baffling as that of contemporary Mexico. Those who attended were sincere men of the finest type, but they naturally could not have had time to study the ecclesiastical situation under Calles as thoroughly as it needs to be investigated. Therefore, the officials of the order rightly took the matter into their own hands and made a clean disavowal of all desire for intervention, lifting of the arms embargo and withdrawal of recognition. They asserted their faith in the present policy of the administration, realizing that this is the reasoned outcome of previous United States efforts and mistakes. In so far as this action was a reversal of opinion, it does honor to the Knights of Columbus by showing that the order is sensitive to public thought and to the sentiment of its own members. We here are naturally particularly glad to endorse the views expressed by Mr. Flaherty at Paul Smith's because they are those we ourselves have held since the beginning of the unfortunate Mexican persecution. Those who believe in the efficacy of prayer and the power of public opinion, cannot doubt that the spiritual

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heritage of 500 years in the land of Las Casas and Guadalupe will suffice unto a new and better age.

IMAGINATION is hard put to it to conceive a more striking instance of special pleading and false reasoning than the telegram sent by Wayne B. Wheeler, the generalissimo of the dry forces, in response to a request from the Literary Digest for information upon the question of denatured alcohol. Nevertheless, the statement is notable. For the first time in any pronouncement from prohibition headquarters, an attempt is made to throw a share of responsibility for the deaths and injury, which are so stirring public conscience, on a quarter outside the government. "Many of the recent reported deaths from alcohol," says Mr. Wheeler, "were caused by the use of synthetic methanol, an imported German product, and not by denatured alcohol. The vendors of this denatured alcohol for illegal purposes are the murderers, and not the government that denatures it and labels it poison." Moreover, as the general counsel of the Anti-Saloon League points out with a fine show of reason, the denaturation of alcohol is not the new thing it is represented to be. Wood alcohol as a denaturant has been in use since 1906.

THE whole statement is a fine sample of what happens when some inveterate dogma, stubbornly maintained in face of proof that it is working widespread injury and injustice, attains such proportions that the entire mental perspective is altered and good and ill are seen on a distorted scale that has no relation to prescriptive truth. To compare 1906 with 1926, is false reasoning because, by the action of the body for which Mr. Wheeler speaks, the entire circumstances have altered. In 1906, as the New York World pertinently recalls, "nobody was poisoned because it was possible to buy taxed beers, wine, liquors, grain alcohol." The "label" with which Mr. Wheeler salves his conscience does not reach the public at all. What reaches it are fake labels certifying the deadly stuff to be authentic gin and whiskey of familiar pre-prohibition brands. And so long as the real labels, of which they are a clever imitation or variation, remain a sufficient guarantee against accident for the class that has money enough to buy safety, so long will prohibition remain something that has dug pits and set traps along the road of daily life. The news, given by the United States Daily, of Washington, that the President has been moved by the public and private protests that are reaching him to order the discontinuance of some of the more deadly poisons and to urge government chemists to find a denaturant that will give a little warning before death or blindness supervenes, projects a ray of hope into a very terrible situation. From Mr. Wheeler and those who think with him, it is, we fear, useless to expect any concession to the law of charity. Robert Burns has told us what is the result of a very different sin, when the conscience has been once overturned by it: "Oh, it hardens a' the heart, and petrifies the feelin'."

WESTWARD the returning tourist from Europe is already beginning to take his way, and a member of the staff of the London Standard, with time upon his hands, has thought it worth his while to consider the home-coming rush and try to imagine what impression of England is likely to predominate in the mind of the American or Canadian who has been seeing it for the first time. After paying his own country a handsome compliment on the solution of the great strike, which seems indeed to be "settled" for everyone but the parties most concerned, the Standard writer with considerable verve, passes to a gentle paean of triumph over the sentimental tourist from across the Atlantic and his disappointment at what he found. "There are Americans," he conjectures, "who came to luxuriate in sight of our nursery-rhyme countryside, with its lovely tangled waste of hedgerows, its barren parks and its cottage flower gardens . . . but who have gone back across their empty prairies with new ideas of our industrial quarters and steady adult energy."

SEVENTY years ago, one who was perhaps the greatest thinker and writer America has produced, was offered (and at an impressionable age) the chance of forming his first idea of England's "industrial quarters and steady adult energy," and, allowing for the familiarity which comes from its reproduction on many an "empty prairie" during the interval, we do not think that his vivid words upon the English Black Country are either yet superseded or to be greatly improved upon. "The plunge into darkness lurid with flame; the sense of unknown horror in this weird gloom which then existed nowhere else and never had existed before, except in volcanic craters; the violent contrast between the dense, sooty, impenetrable darkness, and the soft, green charm we glided into as one emerged," came to Henry Adams as "the revelation of an unknown society of the pit." Industrialism is the present which the genius of England and the ideology of the Protestant reformers have made to the world, and when we find self-congratulation at its persistence coming from the one country industrialized to its marrow, and likely to taste its ripened fruit first, it is impossible to resist a suspicion that someone or other is whistling to keep his courage up.

WHEN all objections to the "dollar standard" have been taken into consideration, there is comforting significance in the figures which have just been published by Dr. Luther E. Lovejoy, of the United Stewardship Council of the Churches of Christ, as to the sums contributed toward the support of religion in the United States and Canada in the year 1925. A new

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conception of money has arisen in the public mind during the last ten years, largely owing to the staggering totals of war expenditure and war indebtedness, but it leaves such a total as $648,000,000, spent on things of the spirit by believers in the Man of Galilee, a positive portent for the times. It is gratifying to know that the proportion contributed by Catholics, as estimated by Dr. Lovejoy, namely, $168,000,000, leads the list, as tabulated under the head of individual communions. This is as it should be. We may regret, if we will, the ungrateful fact that so many fine values in which our Catholic ancestors paid their tithe to God—time, skilled handicraft, personal and corporate devotion—should be, by the evil necessities of our times, submerged under the anonymous symbol of currency. But so long as men are found giving generously of their substance, the shape that substance takes is hardly to be imputed to them for blame. There is food for thought and humble self-congratulation in the words which the son of the great Louis Veuillot, himself a devoted Catholic journalist, has written in France, when contemplating, in retrospective, the recent demonstration of faith at Chicago:

"WE find in the Bible a certain comparison which Americans interpret somewhat differently from ourselves—and I venture to say, better than ourselves. It is the famous parallel drawn between the children of darkness and the children of light. We are too much inclined to endure the inferiority of the second category, which the Scriptures admit, as though it were a humiliation which must be accepted. Our brethren in the United States prefer to consider it as a failing which must be remedied and, so far as concerns themselves, they have remedied it. Methods which succeed in business, they apply decisively and successfully to the things of religion and the apostolate. And, indeed, why not? All these means are but simple instruments, which may be made to serve good causes and evil causes according to the hands which control them and the purpose for which they are employed. Because they have been, far too often, defiled by evil usage, is it impossible—is it forbidden—to consecrate them to the cause of God? Certainly the Americans do not think so."

EXPERIENCE proves that, for slow-moving and bulky freight, water-transport is the most obvious and economical. An article published by the September issue of Poland, a monthly devoted to the interests of the new republic, is of great interest, not only as showing the rapid development of trade and commerce that is being planned for the future, but also as one proof the more of the unnatural check upon the country's prosperity that was effected by the iniquitous partition 140 years ago at the hands of the three "great" predatory powers. Any arrangements for trade that were made during that time were, naturally, made for the profit of the said powers, and did not consider Poland as an entity at all. Hence we are not surprised to hear that "for a hundred years, no new waterways have been undertaken at all . . . That part of the Vistula which was under German control, was rather efficiently regulated," while "Russia did little to improve the Vistula save to put some semaphores along the river bank." Improvements by Austria had only begun on the eve of the war, and came to a sudden end when it broke out.

THE plan which the Polish government is now considering, foresees two great main systems of water-traffic—one running north and south, and using, to a great extent, the surface of the Vistula; the other, east and west, which will eventually take its part in a great trans-European waterway. The scheme necessarily involves the dredging and enlargement of the river-port of Warsaw, and the construction or development of other river-ports, not yet decided on. In estimating the volume of tonnage which the system will carry, pre-war figures are, of necessity, used, and the sharp decline in eastern traffic due to the temporary collapse of Russia must be taken into account. How large a proportion this represents may be gathered from the fact that the total of "ton-kilometers" (an expression similar to "foot-pounds," arrived at, as in "foot-pounds," by multiplying weight of freight by distance covered in transit) reached, in the average for the years 1910 and 1911, was 674,800,000; 265,940,000; and 47,000,000, for Russian, German, and Austrian Poland respectively. It is reassuring to be told that all the signs point to a steady recovery of trade, and that, in the estimate of Engineer Tillinger, in charge of one of the alternative schemes, "in about ten years we shall have to cope with traffic that will exceed the pre-war amount by at least 50 percent, giving a yearly figure of 24,000,000,000 ton-kilometers." One of the strongest recommendations for the water-power development, apart from the eventual saving on the necessarily higher railroad freight, which often wipes out profit by movement charges, is the fact that, by its adoption, an immediate cut of $70,000,000 can be made from the Polish government's total estimate for railroad development throughout the republic, leaving only $30,000,000 as an extra charge for the riparian project.

A NEW point of meeting for East and West is suggested by the Reverend A. F. Lopes, now visiting the United States. He wishes to interest as many generous Americans as possible in the erection of a resident foundation for Catholic youth in the city of Madras. Twelve similar establishments have already been made by Protestant donors, which indicates how attractive such places of meeting are for oriental youth. From them go out young men acquainted with the nature of Christianity and endowed, by reason of

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their race and mentality, for the exemplification and teaching of religious culture. If hard-working missionaries in India deserve all the support they can get —and obviously, for numberless reasons they do— then the work for which Father Lopes is pleading ought to be made possible in a short while. Not only is the activity which such institutions purpose to carry on urgently called for by the growing national and racial consciousness in eastern lands, but it is thoroughly in line with the desire of Pope Pius XI for the establishment of native priesthoods and episcopacy all over the missionary world.

THE WORLD'S CONSCIENCE

LUCIEN ROMIER, director of Le Figaro, has done as much as any living Frenchman to reunite intelligence and political opinion. Thus there is a lapidary pertinence in this passage from the address he delivered at the recent French Social Week: "War is the most deceptive, the most costly, and the most perilous form of expansion; it enriches only those who do not engage in it. Not statesmen, politicians, or diplomats can avert it. We must rely upon the intellectual leaders of the different peoples, and upon their collaboration in the economic, social, intellectual, and moral concerns of mankind. And when we reach this point, the problem becomes a problem of religion."

Once make war uneconomic, unsocial, stupid and unmoral—once make people realize these adjectives concretely—and there would be no armed conflict. Obviously, however, this cannot be done in a single day, and so peace is a problem. Only the solution does depend—we must never forget—upon what sane pedagogical efforts are made on behalf of international solidarity by those who have the pedagogical responsibility.

Obviously, this responsibility lies more heavily upon the Catholic Church than upon any other human group. The Church is the world's conscience; it is, by its very nature, apart from such separatist interests as national ambitions. No plea of modern years has been more fervent or unceasing than that of the Papacy to mankind, for the establishment of amity and the ending of discord.

But how has it been listened to and heeded? Until quite recently, these noblest of modern encyclicals— more necessary and, because born out of experience, more profound than even the Rerum Novarum—were scarcely even read. The Social Week referred to previously is, in fact, the first collective recognition of them by French Catholics. In its concluding resolutions, this "week" (a word for which we have no applicable connotation in English, the thing designated being a week of conferences and addresses on social problems) declared that ethics demanded justice in international relations, and that existing machinery for the promotion of this justice ought to be used and, if necessary, reformed.

At almost the same time, the German Society of Catholic Scholars was weighing the problem of social order and turning some of its attention to the international situation. Those present listened to an address by a Benedictine prior, on the subject of The Peace Mission of the Kingdom of Christ; and to an intelligent discussion of nationalism by a Viennese publicist who moves constantly in the world of action. This enlistment of ideas from all walks of life was, in fact, a characteristic aspect of the German Society's meeting, just as it added piquancy and effectiveness to the deliberations of the French "week." We seem to have forgotten rather generally that the basis of peace is spiritual, and that real harmony can only result from a patient blending of many good but divergent points of view. Opinion need not be synthetic; but it must be coöperative. Therefore, Monsignor Ignaz Seipel's view of the League of Nations, formulated also for the benefit of the German scholars, was most opportune. He attributed the weaknesses of Geneva to the weaknesses of the assembled peoples, not to individual national arrogance; concluding that the preparation for international solidarity must be made at home.

This awakening of the Catholic conscience to the great moral purpose suggested by the Papacy, is one of the happiest incidents of our time. It is sincerely to be hoped that, regardless of the general American indifference to what happens abroad, we also, in our own manner, will eventually arrange adequately for the consideration of those multiform great problems suggested by the international scene. One might add that the general Catholic congresses, now about to open in both England and Germany, also bear upon this topic, because, whatever may be their shortcomings and inevitable concessions to crowd-pageantry and hastily formed opinion, they have the invaluable quality of being able to rally the public round about ideas. They are vehicles through which the wisdom of humanity, exalted by revelation—the Sancta Sophia, reverence for which must return to modern civilization—is made democratic and widely efficacious. Assuredly, it is strange that here in the United States, where organization is more complete and implicitly trusted than anywhere else in the world, no effort has as yet been made to create a congress at which clergy and laity, leaders and thinkers, men active and contemplative, can call to mind communal principles and purposes. We think that the miracle of the loaves is an excellent exemplar here. Out of a basket of bread, Christ made a feast for the multitude. And certainly those, who coming before the throng with ideas born out of a desire to enlarge the love for Him among men, might indeed bring about, in a manner marvelous even to themselves, the greater spiritual sustenance of many.

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FROM DADAISM TO AQUINAS

By G. R. GARRETT

JEAN COCTEAU, in a public letter to his friend, Jacques Maritain, the brilliant exponent of Thomism, announces his conversion to Catholicism and his intention of dedicating his creative talents to God. Cocteau, poet, novelist, artist, and critic, is the man whom Clive Bell once hailed as "the last word in modernity," and "the most brilliant mind of his generation."

In France, where religion and art both enlist a critical seriousness which is denied them in England and America, this letter and Maritain's reply to it, cannot fail to exert a far-reaching influence in both fields. Not that Cocteau contemplates combining them by becoming a religious poet, as the term is commonly understood. Quite the contrary. And his intent not to, affords a significant clue to his mind and to the mind of Maritain, who was instrumental in his conversion.

To philosopher and to poet, the task of the poet is one whose natural sacredness and dignity cannot be heightened by superadding to it the task of the apologist. Of itself and by its own right, art is from on high, declares Maritain. "Not only does it derive in a sense from the archetypal art which created the world, but to have some idea of its nobility it is necessary to call to mind the mystery of the procession of the Word." A full discussion of the idea, which is Catholic and Thomist, will be found in the two letters, offering the most penetrating comments upon art and religion that have appeared in a generation.

Imbedded in them is the intensely poignant and significant personal drama which they illuminate and explain—the story of Cocteau's conversion. Huysmans's conversion, naturally speaking, flowed from his devotion to mediaeval art. The natural antecedents of Cocteau's conversion are to be found in another realm—the realm of aesthetic theory. For years Cocteau, the critic and artist, emphasized the need for order—for intelligence in art. It was the cardinal tenet of his aesthetic creed, and by it he meant not the servile order of the academician, an order imposed from without, but a living order born afresh every moment in the heart and brain of the artist. The day came when he was to realize that his aesthetic principles have their parallel in another world—the world of the spirit. Here also there is an order which is born afresh every moment—the order of supernatural grace. Here also there is need for detachment, for subordination of the means to the end, for domination of the sensible faculties by the intelligence, for all the virtues Cocteau had extolled in his aesthetic. It was an order, however, of which he knew nothing. Beneath his ceaseless activity in the world of art lay an inner disquietude which he tried vainly to forget. Sleep offered him his only solace, and even its refuge was broken into by the thought that he must awaken the following morning.

"Oh, those mornings!" he exclaims, recalling their horror. "You found yourself in the dirty water and knew you must swim."

Maritain met him and sensed the tragedy of his inner life. Max Jacob, the poet, his friend and a convert from Judaism, sensed it also and recommended him to receive the Sacraments. Instead of following this advice, however, Cocteau had recourse to opium.

"Quietism in pellets—the sacrament of the devil," said Maritain, adding that this "homicidal blunder par excellence of trying to heal one's self of the human by means that are human, or animal, or vegetable, is one that circulates among all false mystics."

The fallaciousness of its lure soon became apparent to Cocteau—though not until the habit, which he first found repugnant, had fastened itself upon him. He entered a sanitarium for treatment. During it, opium was left where he could have recourse to it whenever his craving became too imperious for denial, but he did not touch it. It is Maritain's letter, not his, that supplies this detail of the story.

Maritain visited him during his convalescence. It was following his discharge, when he was a guest at Maritain's home, that he met the Trappist monk, Father Charles, whose puissant sanctity accomplished the work of his conversion. Never had he seen an ease, a selfless assurance like that which he found in this white-robed hermit from the sands of Africa, of whom he knew nothing save that he belonged to the order which had lately numbered Father de Foucauld among its adherents. From his silence on the monk's entrance, all present sensed what was to follow.

"The solitude sent you a contemplative," writes Maritain. "Contemplative and poet understood each other."

The significance of this conversion does not lie in its drama but in its orientation and in the program which Cocteau announces in his letter. Here is a figure, a mind, a personality, which have impressed themselves not only upon French art and letters where their influence has been felt by such figures as Satie, Picasso, Stravinsky, the Groupe des Six, but also upon those groups in England and America to whom Paris is the capital of modern culture. Picture the bewilderment of one who believed in Cocteau as a radical of radicals—an apostle of modernity—viewing in Paris in April of this year the window of the Librairie Stock, in the Place du Palais Royal. The focal point of that display which included Cocteau's Lettre à Jacques

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Maritain, and his photograph along with the works of other Catholic writers, was a large painting of Saint Thomas Aquinas adoring Christ. The "last word in modernity," and a man whose philosophy the world has turned its back upon! A rebel poet and a Catholic saint—how explain such a juxtaposition?

Its incongruity is superficial. Beneath it lies a harmony which the modern world has forgotten—a harmony which Saint Thomas devoted his whole life to elucidating. As children we are taught that our end, the purpose of our existence, is to know, to love, to serve God in this world, and to be happy with Him forever in the next. Saint Thomas tells us that this happiness will be a happiness of the understanding —the Beatific Vision. Now the modern world has retained two of these ideas, or semblances of them, in its undogmatic creed; but it has wholly abandoned the third. It subscribes vociferously, if not always with unimpeachable sincerity, to the concept of service, and looks with favor upon activity of every sort. A part of the modern world tolerates, another part approves of, our loving God. But outside of Catholicism, the modern world scouts the possibility of our knowing God. Indeed, it prefers not to speak of God. For God, it substitutes "the idea of God"; for faith, an act of the understanding, "the will to believe." We have schools of philosophy. We have no philosophy, and the very word is anathema to many. Relativity rules the field.

Good intentions, without a guiding intelligence, are worthless, as Maritain points out in his letter. Intelligence must be snatched from the demon and restored to God. There may be no punishment for virtuous stupidity in the next world, but that does not prevent there being very sure ones for it in this one. "Upon a disfigured reason, all that is built must crumble. That is why," he adds, "I have given my life to Saint Thomas, and labor to make known his teaching. I do not ask that everyone become philosopher and theologian. That would be the death of these beautiful sciences. Each should know according to his capacity. But I do say this, if one lacks right reason, if one scorns wisdom, all the good he wills will turn to evil. . . . A great deal of love is lost in a world which is without the truth."

Will Cocteau, the intransigent, the rebel, lose the qualities which made him so provocative a figure yesterday when he was the champion of the new and the startling in music and letters? Not if the tone of his letter is an indication. It has the audacity of the Gospels, an audacity which use and wont too often make us confuse with its opposite. There need be little fear that a world which finds all new manifestations of truth and beauty shocking, will find Cocteau, the Catholic, less provocative, less challenging than his former self.

"Is there," he asks, "any program more exciting, more dangerous, than to follow Christianity literally?"

NATHAN HALE—THE BELOVED SPY

By EDYTHE H. BROWNE

IT IS dawn in the apple orchard. September 22, 1776, sees City Hall Park in New York a daisied acre with a stray farmhouse, General Howe's headquarters, in the pale distance. The day begins with an execution in the orchard. The coil of hangman's rope dangles like a serpent from the limb of an apple tree. A tattered crowd loiters about—farmers on their way to market, innkeepers who relish a hanging for the cruel gossip it affords, men and women with sleep in their eyes and tainted curiosity in their hearts.

Suddenly a red wall with a white blotch in its centre moves from the farmhouse; drums mutter, and the executing squad of the British army, led by Provost-Marshal Cunningham, halts near the tree. The victim, whose wrists are locked behind him, is a young man of twenty-one. Garbed in the white suit of the condemned, the figure assumes an intrusive innocence. With a tipsy sneer, Cunningham demands a last word. The youth raises his chin.

"I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country."

The rope is so fastened about the young man's neck that the knot presses on a large mole. A witch's prophecy comes true. "Swing the rebel off!" thunders Cunningham. And the rebel swings.

Nathan Hale, the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of whose death occurs September 22, was a spy. By the grim exactions of war, he was justly hanged as a spy. The condemning evidence was found on his person. Technically, he is a neat clipping from the page of history of what a spy should be. But why do we call Hale "beloved"? "Spy" is a stealthy word, tart even on the tongue. The man turned spy, wearing the scurvy coat of deceit, is the accomplice of night, picking his treacherous way among shadows. He stakes his life, not so much for love of country as for promotion or money. So leprous is the office that no ruler may command a candidate; the latter's duty is voluntary. Americans call Hale beloved because he was such a glorious misfit. He was physically, mentally, and morally equipped, not for the mongrel vocation of a spy, but for an honorable career—a career focused probably on great military achievement. His youth, too, removes him from the file of inveterate spies who have lived to learn more

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cunningness. Because of his measure as a man, we regard him as the "beloved" spy.

Young America plays marbles about the MacMonnies statue of Hale in City Hall Park. Hale is the patron of youth. Most books about him are found in the children's room of public libraries. Sacrifice is noble, always; but sacrifice of youth even unto death is inspiring. Youth is precious because it holds aloft the chalice of golden prospects. Hale's record as a soldier was unsullied, and as a favorite of Washington, he stood on the threshold of army promotion. When Washington received the bitter news of execution, the devastating thought that, instrumentally, he had crushed life in the bud, pounded at his heart.

By surrendering himself to his country, Hale let slip the caressing hand of his betrothed—beautiful Alice Adams. Captain Hale, as the gentleman with the gracious smile and courtly bearing, was prince among the courtesying Betseys and Marthas of colonial society. He pointed a graceful toe in the minuet—he popped a joke over the fan of the blushing coquette. He finally quarried real love from the heart of Alice, and became engaged on the eve of his leaden journey to Long Island.

The spy, who leads a crouching existence, is usually fancied as the misshapen figure of slumping shoulders and cowering head. Skulking through life, he wears a sallow cheek. Physical fitness animates every statue of Nathan Hale—the slim body spiring to a height of nearly six feet; the pinioned wrists, stout bands of muscle; the broad chest expanding with health and sublime courage. Unlike the pose of a spy, the Hale of William Ordway Partridge on the Yale Green stands with its weight thrust forward on a challenging foot. But no sculptured tribute can tell of the sportive blue eye that accompanied Hale's bid for death, when he said to Washington: "I will undertake the mission." Nor can stone convey the blush that glowed in his face. A tender mother lived to see her sixth son the athlete of the family, the limber stripling who could run and hunt like a savage over the grassy downs of Coventry. Fate was lenient to the adoring mother in timing her death four years before that of her distinguished son.

When Washington as Commander-in-Chief called for a volunteer to mouse along the British lines, he knew that the serious errand was not to be entrusted to the merely patriotic enthusiast. Only a man of arch mentality could estimate the situations of camps by a chance word dropped by a snoozing private; only the academic mind could analyze a plan of attack through wrangling and discussion, and thereby gauge the number of enemy red-coats on Long Island. When Hale presented himself, the discerning Washington, realizing the fitness of the young captain, instantly accepted him.

At ten years of age, Nathan Hale astonished his tutor, the Reverend Dr. Huntington, by his mastery of grammar. Reading and questioning, he accumulated bits of knowledge with the same zest that he hoarded miggles. Early American educators argued that the lad of unusual promise should be trained for the ministry, a calling incorporate with learning and culture. So Nathan entered Yale at the age of fifteen to prepare himself for the cloth. In recognition of his distinction as an English scholar, Hale was elected chancellor of the Linonian Society—a Yale literary coterie. In 1773, he stepped from the graduation platform onto the sanded floor of the tiny schoolhouse at East Haddam, Connecticut, and took up the teacher's ruler.

The ministry was still a torch in the distance, but Hale lingered among his pupils for almost a year. Then he was appointed first preceptor of the Union Grammar School, at New London. It is said that Hale's wreathy handwriting, delicate black lace in the model copy-book, influenced the educational board in his favor. Penmanship was a winning art in Nathan Hale's day; the schoolmaster who could teach chubby hands delicate finger motion was invaluable. The telltale wafer of paper, carrying nebulous Latin in pen flourishes, found between the soles of Hale's shoes, must have exasperated the impatient General Howe, who had to labor long deciphering it. Hale had an ingenious twist to his brain that suggested loose shoe-soles as twin wallets for the safekeeping of his notes.

One morning, New London breakfasted on the news of Lexington and Concord; and Hale left the blackboard to shoulder the musket. The torch of the ministry had burned out.

As captain of a company, Hale now put his college-trained mind to practical army work. Under his direction, his company became a model body of trim, neat-stepping, smoke-eating Yankees. Drilled himself in that trump detachment of the Continental army known as "Knowlton's Rangers," he led his men in strategic moves that called forth commendation from superiors.

It was from the simple régime at the Conventry farmhouse that Nathan Hale absorbed that becoming modesty so actual in his later career. His letter of resignation to the school board prior to his enlistment might have been a sheaf of golden opinions about himself and his patriotic duty. Instead, it was a quiet apology for the unavoidable pause that must now interrupt his work as schoolmaster. Unlike Major André, Hale, at his execution, was even too modest to ask to be treated "like a gentleman."

In kinship with his modesty, Hale was consistently unselfish. The autumn of 1776 saw the American army a tangled skein of men on Manhattan Island, all loyal but all with holes in their shoes. "Desertion" buzzed along the lines; and on its scurrilous heels came Captain Hale offering his own food and salary to the dangerously sulky soldiers. The unselfish Hale emerges in a variety of incident, but perhaps with no

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more force than in his own words. As companions flocked around him in Colonel Knowlton's tent, after he had committed himself to act the spy, he said:

"For a year I have been attached to the army, and have not rendered any material service, while receiving a compensation for which I make no return."

Hale was restless in passive service because it smacked of selfish security. His last lamenting phrase, that has jingled for 150 years in the patch-pocket of American patriotism, was dictated by an unselfish heart.

Stability, the girder of great character, was Hale's most resourceful characteristic. He had to stand at anchor to resist his friends, among them his college friend, William Hull, who begged him to decline the vizor of the spy. He had to stand unblinking before Howe to be able to acknowledge himself a spy—to explain his life away, without a quiver of hesitation. Testimony to Hale's resolute bearing is found in the parenthesis of an entry in a British Orderly Book: "A spy from the enemy (by his own full confession) apprehended last night, was this day executed." He had to stand immovable to refuse the enticing offer of a pardon from Howe—a pardon on traitorous terms.

Courage was the ascendant note in Hale's character. From birth, the augurous words, "liberty" and "independence," rang in his ears. To all men born on the brink of great events, is given special power of soul to withstand the undertow. With an American wilderness under the hatchet of colonization, with English misrule buffeting the alien colonist, with revolt tearing at men's insides, courage was imperious. An early spurt of the radical courage that ultimately carried Hale to death, is shown when, as a mere boy, he addressed a fractious mass-meeting.

"Let us not lay down our arms," he said, "until we have gained our independence!"

Shrilly he shouted the last word; yet only the day before a patriot had been executed for whispering the term. Once Hale courageously captured a British sloop, slumbering under guard in the East River.

Hale's great act of courage—volunteering to spy—was not simply the froth of an hysterical moment. It was a deliberate courage, weighed and sifted by devout reflection and consultation with dearest friends. It was courage many layers thick.

The Leaven

In the measure of her meal
The good wife hides the little ball of leaven.
By night and day it works amid the meal,
Till a day comes when all is leaven.

In the measure of my life
Years ago, God hid a little secret pain.
Through joy and sorrow it has wrought in me:
Tonight there is nothing else in life but pain.

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

MONKS AND MONKS

By THOMAS WALSH

WITHOUT a sense of reverence, there is no real blasphemy: the man taking the name of God in vain is breathing an empty speech if we are to understand that he does not recognize a Creator. Reverence is also necessary in a consideration of the comic and humorous, so that it is no wonder to find that the monastery and its dweller, man or woman, was from the beginning of Christianity the butt of easy ridicule, burlesque, fantastic satire, and more or less venomous slander.

The pagan writers felt at once the opportunity to poke their witticisms and gibes at the practices of early Christians, so different in many respects from the urbane imperialists of paganism. In the cruder development of the monastic system, the later Latin story-tellers fathered material, edifying and disconcerting, fantastic errors and stupidities, upon the irregularities of the monastic folk who were increasing constantly in numbers and in the possibilities of human weaknesses and errors, side by side with the developing growth of sanctities and power for good and edification. There were no "unco guid" folk ready to formulate heresies, as in our later days. A bad or weak churchman was a bad or weak limb of a great tree that stretched naturally its beneficent shelter over all mankind. Christ had promised that the infernal gates should never prevail over His Church, so it was comparatively easy to mock the churchman without ever a thought of injuring the innocent or giving any approval to carpings at the seamless robe of faith.

This scurrilous tendency to use the monk as a lay figure in corrupt situations became a favorite resort of the earliest Italian novellieri, from whom our modern fictions trace their direct descent. These delightful scandal-mongers were soon joined by the French conteurs with such an ardor of industry that a whole school of satire and humor was created for the benefit of the story-tellers of Spain, Germany, and England. Monks and nuns were in almost every family, with national, racial, and fireside peculiarities—very human folk when all is said and done, and not at all like the wooden and stained glass monstrosities that a false piety and a lack of historical acumen have imposed upon little minds, little sects, little sentimentalists and bigots of our later generations. It would, indeed, have caused a vast wonderment in the minds of such writers as Dante, Chaucer, and Rabelais to hear that their pen-sketches of conventual oddities were accepted by so-called historians of today as arguments against the monastery and the Church—against Catholic morale and decency.

An extraordinary figure in Spanish literature, Juan Ruiz, the archpriest of Hita, in the course of whose

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collected works are to be found stories and passages in questionable accord with good taste of today, has given rise to a serious dispute among Hispanic scholars as to the significance and the sources of his familiarity with the rather bestial dark places in the mountain wilds of Spain in the fourteenth century. And this, strange to say, among scholars not unacquainted with the queer animalistic and monstrous fantasies of the painters and tapestry-weavers of these strongly imaginative periods.

We have, in English, the series of ballads relating the adventures of Friar Tuck; but these ballads lose almost all their flavor if we are to believe that the majority of the monks of his time at all resembled the doughty trencherman and brigand of Sherwood Forest. The spirit of this balladry is largely in the exaggeration and unusual character of his adventures.

The monk, Montaudon, the founder and president of the Court of Love in old Provençe, is another fantastic figure among monks—partly historical, partly fictional. Don Folquet, now beatified, the Bishop of Toulouse in the times of the Albigenses, is yet another poetical figure wrenched by the venom of religious controversies, not from the altar where he came to be enshrined, but into the dubious light of persecutions and civil wars. Torquemada, the fiery old Inquisitor whose tomb is still sacred in Avila, is another personality snatched from his proper historical setting to be the sport of bigots and the half-wits of history and fiction. It took a Frenchman of the queer religious complexion of Victor Hugo to paint the diabolical colors of his Claude Frollo in Notre Dame de Paris, following in the great chorus of English and German monk-o-phobia, cultivators of the trap-door Jesuits, slanderers of the missionaries of South America, busy with the thinly-spun yarns of Giordano Bruno, Savonarola, Galileo, Richelieu, Wolsey, Alexander VI and the half-told histories of the Borgias.

The full summary of these unfounded scandals of misinformed and miscalculating satirists, story-tellers, and evil-propagandists came over the more modern English world in an absolutely preposterous novel which was to prove model of a whole school of fiction out of which Dumas and Sardou were to make much of their profit and notoriety.

Matthew Gregory Lewis produced his strange farrago of romance, The Monk, in the summer of 1795. He was then twenty years of age, but he had the premonition wise enough to take as his motto for his romance the lines of Horace: "Somnia, terrores magicos, miracula, nocturnos lemures portentaque, sagas"; which, in English, may be rendered as a list of his contents: "Dreams, magic terrors, spells of wondrous power, nightly ghosts, and portents."

He was a rather charming young man. Lord Byron said of him, "Lewis was a good man, a clever man, but a bore; and a damned bore, one may say." He was of aristocratic family, the eventual heir to wealth, and imbued with a great deal of humanistic benevolence which led him several times to the Island of Jamaica for the protection and betterment of the slaves upon his plantations. He died of yellow fever in 1818 on his way back to England, and was buried at sea. This "most generous creature," as Walter Scott called him, produced in The Monk a work that was never equaled by any of his subsequent romances.

He tells us he was encouraged to finish the composition of The Monk by the reading of The Mysteries of Udolpho. On publishing it, he was immediately acclaimed by the public and assailed by certain critics for immorality and lack of originality, who pointed out its resemblance to The Devil in Love, by Cangotti; to The Sorcerer; and to Smollett's Ferdinand Count Fathom. The attorney-general actually started a prosecution against him which was never brought to court.

One of the critics was early to discover that where a friar was concerned, Lewis's mind was "strangely warped"; and another very dubiously remarks that, "had he been mindful of the practice in Roman Catholic countries and in Spain, perhaps above all others, he would not have introduced into his pages the picture of a young woman reading the Bible at all." The objectionable features of the story are a series of love intrigues carried on in the Capuchin monastery of Madrid by a young lady disguised as a novice, who leads the eloquent Abbot Ambrosio into a career of sin, where he is seized by the familiars of the Inquisition. The fiend himself, thereupon enters his cell, promises his rescue if he will renounce his Creator and Saviour, and when he has obtained the Abbot's contract signed in blood, leads him into the wilderness and addresses him with this fine old-stage speech which actors generally denominate as "fat":

"Wretch, you shall soon be with her! You deserve it, for hell boasts no miscreant more guilty than yourself. Hark, Ambrosio, while I unveil your crimes! You have shed the blood of two innocents. Antonia and Elvira perished by your hand. That Antonia, whom you violated, was your sister! That Elvira, whom you murdered, gave you birth! Tremble, abandoned hypocrite! Inhuman parricide! Incestuous ravisher! Tremble at the extent of your offenses! And you it was who thought yourself proof against temptation, absolved from human frailties, and free from error and vice! Is pride then a virtue? Is inhumanity no fault? Know, vain man, that long I watched you for my prey; I watched the movements of your heart. I saw that you were virtuous from vanity, not principle; and I seized the fit moment"; etc., etc., in the same manner, and worse.

Such was the charming type handed over to the British romancer, such The Monk, for whom Matthew Gregory Lewis lived long to make amends, apologies, and explanations. His fine summary of nonsense was

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not suffered to fall into disuse, but advancing time and increasing discretion upon the part of readers caused Anatole France, in constructing a character for his Abbé Coignard, to resort to earlier fiction of a hectic hue, to the prevailing theories of contemporary phrenologists, psychoanalysts, penologists, amid a general break-down of logic, a scorn of probabilities, and a fantastic lust out of the pages of demonology.

This fable for grown-ups has been the accepted interpretation of disordered monasticism between lapses of gibes at the stout and healthy old clergymen, the portly bishops and complacent dwellers in the cloister. One of the strongest temptations of disordered minds is to assail monks for breaking their vows and at the same time ridicule them for keeping them. A priest is blamed for being unruly, but his irregularity forms his real delight in their pages. A sinner committing his sin is a commonplace; but one cannot be profligate enough, unless he is pictured as a disordered priest or monk! The contrasts of sanctity and evil are very conveniently established by such a presentation. The compliment implied in this attitude toward the great body of churchmen and conventuals down the whole reach of the ages is such an enormous tribute to holiness, decorum, and virtue, that it will find some difficulty in gaining proper appreciation in the minds of the little ignoramuses and bigots who make up so large a part of our boasted intelligentsia.

COMMUNICATIONS

THE VALENTINO FUNERAL

Emmitsburg, Md.

TO the Editor:—As a subscriber to The Commonweal, will you permit me to wonder out loud in your letter column? The New York Times of August 23 carried two items that, if true, are an indictment of Catholicity as practised in certain sections of your great city. The first stated:

"More than five hundred members of the theatrical profession filled the Actors' Chapel of Saint Malachy's Roman Catholic Church, 239 West Forty-ninth Street, at the eleven o'clock Mass yesterday. Funeral services for Rudolph Valentino are to be held there today. The Reverend Edward F. Leonard, pastor of the church, preached on love. Although he did not mention Valentino by name, it was understood that the sermon was suggested by his death. Father Leonard said that love was one of the strongest forces in man's existence. He described the love of the child for its parents, the romantic love of maturity, and the love of mankind for God; and said that the agony of Jesus on the cross was a manifestation of His great love for mankind."

Now every decent man and woman on earth hopes that Valentino died a Christian death, and that he is in heaven—but that the quick death of a young Catholic man, who had two divorced wives living and was about to take a third, should suggest to a Catholic priest a sermon on "love" to be delivered to the actor's professional friends, tempted as they are along similar lines, is merely an encouragement to that kind of living in the hope of a last moment repentance.

The next item concerns the ceremonies and concert:

"The high Requiem Mass at Saint Malachy's Church at eleven o'clock this morning will be celebrated by the Reverend Edward F. Leonard, pastor of the church, assisted by four other priests acting as deacon, subdeacon, and masters of ceremonies. The soloists will be Guido Ciccolini of the Chicago Opera Company, and Demetri Onotri of the San Carlo Opera Company. The 'cellist will be Mario Caiati and the violinist, Enzo Pascarella. There will also be a choir sextette. The program includes: Processional, Miserere, by Spoth; Offertory, Ave Maria, by Gounod, solo with violin obligato; Post Communion, Elegy, by Massenet, solo with 'cello obligato; Recessional, Tribulations, by Schweitzer. Chopin's Funeral March will be played by Professor Davis."

What special sign of respect is left for a worthy Catholic life at the end, if five priests assist in this case at a solemn Requiem Mass? Is it permitted to ask were the Cardinal of New York and the Apostolic Delegate invited? One thinks of the Beatitudes, of the poor and the lowly beloved of Christ, and the thing becomes a jumble. And then, "God save the mark" soloists, from the Chicago and San Carlo Opera Companies; Gounod's Ave Maria; and Massenet's Elegy!

Haven't we been hearing a great deal about the rebirth of Catholic Church music? Solos were to be barred and profane music was to have no place—there was even talk of plainchant. One wonders if perhaps the Church is joking!

The program at Saint Malachy's Church was meant to be impressive—it was farcical, though doubtless soothing to the listeners, including the star from Hollywood who faints so easily and so frequently. Quite as soothing, yet how much more impressive and heart-searching for the transplanted "diamond horseshoe" audience, would have been the Catholic Church's De Profundis:

"Out of the depths to Thee, O Lord, I cry; Lord Gracious, turn Thine ear to suppliant sigh. If sins of man Thou scannest, who may stand that searching eye of Thine and chastening hand? O hear our prayers and sighs, Redeemer Blest; and grant Thy holy souls eternal rest. And let perpetual light upon them shine; for though not spotless, still these souls are Thine."

REV. E. F. REILLY.

PRIESTS AND POLITICS

Seabright, N. J.

TO the Editor:—We are so often accused of favoring Catholics for political office that it is a great pleasure to be able to quote from The Record, a Catholic weekly published in Louisville, Kentucky. The editor states that:

"He is neither friendly nor unfriendly to any candidate for public office, he observes the fitness of some Catholics, and the unfitness of others. He knows there are prejudices involved, now in favor, and now against a Catholic candidate. He is familiar with the ways in which professional politicians (Catholic politicians included) stir up prejudices and exploit them. He considers it as reprehensible to support a Catholic merely because he is a Catholic as to oppose a Catholic on that ground. He is fully persuaded that the active participation of priests in politics, as this term is accepted in our country, is unnecessary for the public good, is seldom warranted, and never justifiable by the fact that non-Catholic ministers are active in that sphere. Two wrongs never make a right."

ALICE WARREN.

[*The editor of The Record of Louisville, Kentucky, is Mr. Benedict Elder.—The Editors.*]

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POEMS

The Triumph of Caliban

This water cannot satisfy my drouth:
There is sweeter water far to the south.
Ariel, Ariel, what strength has Caliban?

This bread is barren and it has no zest:
Bread with a flavor abounds in the west.
Ariel, Ariel, have ruth for Caliban.

The soil is arid and it brings not forth:
Better soil there is far off in the north.
Ariel, Ariel, be kind to Caliban.

I cannot abide the roaring of the beast:
The animals bear burdens tamely in the east.
Ariel, Ariel, bow down to Caliban.

The race has been puny since Adam began it:
Wiser men there are on a distant planet.
Ariel, Ariel, a god is Caliban.

The grief is about me, the enervating curse:
Happiness dwells in another universe.
Ariel, Ariel, be slain by Caliban.

LEO MARKUN.

Exit

There is one caller I shall have,
Though all the rest pass by:
He will be decorous and kind,
But sorely troubled I.

For oh, the dust upon my loom!
The rose leaves on the floor!
And still within its yellowed cloth
One talent and no more!

But I shall have no time to sweep,
Or freshen webs grown dim,
For when this caller turns away,
His host departs with him.

MARIE BLAKE.

Face Down

Earth is so delicately spun
  Of silver thread and golden thread—
Warp of moon and woof of sun,

The earth swings out so airily
  Along its pale, star-dusty track—
Mote in a beam I cannot see,

Shadow and substance swiftly pass—
  And frail, so frightened and so frail,
These hands that clutch the yielding grass!

MAVIS MCINTOSH.

Pansies

The precious pansies flowered yellow, purple too.
Dear Raymond, if there was pretense to others,
The garden was kept beautiful for you.

Oh, if the circumstance of living smothers
Victims, unwilling, in drab influence—
Tall rushes barricading heavily,
The butterflies' vagaries with a stiff omnipotence—
Should such calamity imprison me,
An unrelenting darkness at high noon,
Will you remember the devoted pansies tucked away?
And will you find—and love them—very soon?

For if you shall arrive while it is day,
Like miracles performed in holy places,
When the sun must sink
Your fingers' touches could be courage on their faces.

Oh, water them as thoughtfully as dew;
Always—don't you think?
Pansies grown, for Raymonds even, are so few!

DOROTHY HAIGHT.

New England

There are rocks, like grass, hiding the soil.
"Row them up in a long wall."

There's a harsh rack of bitter snow.
"Make yourself ready: this will go."

There are runty shrubs, and thickets of trees.
"Your fire and ax will talk to these."

Winter comes soon, and the ears still green.
"Let others do your harvesting."

We fade; dark stunted hordes come tumbling.
"Fade, then, without grumbling."

Why should we strain over this bleak sod?
"Labor—the rest to tomorrow, and God."

CLEMENT WOOD.

Leaves

Leaves do three things
And do them well:
Grow patiently, unmurmuring,
Through long hours;
Flare scarlet and gold,
Making themselves radiant
For dying;
And fall silently,
To hover over sleeping flowers
In dim forgotten graves.

RUTH E. HOPKINS.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

The Donovan Affair

OWEN DAVIS, so legend runs, has more than a hundred produced plays to his credit, with at least three or four new ones that threaten to run simultaneously in New York this winter. Such prolific activity might create the impression that the ink in his mental fountain-pen is, after the fashion of some perverse pens, running over just before it runs dry. But The Donovan Affair shows no symptoms of so melancholy an end to the Davis facility. It is, throughout most of its length, a rattling good mystery play, swift in its dialogue, compact and interesting in its individual scenes, and replete with those inevitable incidents which draw gasps from the more stalwart breasts and incipient squeals from less decorous members of the audience.

As usual, the management and the author request audience and reviewers alike to keep dark the secret of the final curtain. So be it. I shall say nothing to imperil the suspense of future witnesses of this spine-chiller. But perhaps I can say, with all propriety, that, as a somewhat hardened viewer of mysteries, my first suspicion, which I discarded for the simple reason that it seemed too obvious, turned out correct. Probably Mr. Davis intended this to be so. The time has come when most people decide in the first act that the seemingly most innocent of all parties must turn out to be the culprit—not because of any semblance of logic, but because the hackneyed method has been to direct suspicion everywhere except in the right direction.

Now, there were twelve people present at the Rankin dinner up in Westchester county when young Donovan was stabbed in his chair. All twelve are brought in for inquisition in the first two minutes of the play, and at least four of them are candidates for immediate suspicion. So my above comment is purely the offspring of a personal reaction. It will not help you in the least to solve the mystery.

It is also in order to remark that the solution, when it does come, seems rather forced and weak. The particular party whom I suspected (man or woman?) I happened to mistrust on general principles only, and not at all because of the motive revealed in the last two minutes of action. That motive seemed far too coincidental and manufactured to sustain everything that had gone before. But as the real fun of a mystery play is in the mystery and not in its solution, this detracts very little from the evening as a whole. Miriam Doyle, Eleanor Woodruff, Renita Randolph, and Phoebe Foster did much to give an earnest and almost tragic reality to the first two acts. Niles Welch, Joseph Robison, and Paul Harvey, for the male contingent, did the same. In fact the entire cast, with the exception of Robert T. Haines, as Peter Rankin, was excellent. Mr. Haines was far too stagey for the general atmosphere of plausibility so well sustained by the others.

If I Was Rich

THE new Mansfield theatre has apparently decided to play host to a success at last. That is, if continuous laughter is any index of success. William Anthony McGuire has written this farce-comedy of clerical ambitions in the same full-blooded vein as Six Cylinder Love, and quite as expressly for Joe Laurie, Jr., as the earlier play was a vehicle for Ernest Truex. As those who have seen Laurie in vaudeville will know, he is cast in the Truex mold, although pleasantly individual. Small in stature, well versed in getting points across, gifted with all the mannerisms that melt so quickly from comedy into pathos, he needs only a full stock of the old and tried hokum to give everyone a pleasant and untaxing evening.

And in hokum this new play abounds—stock situations that have been used from the dawn of history and will be until the book of time closes. There is the honest shipping-clerk, his extravagant and silly wife, the crusty employer with a sentimental heart, the crooked Wall Street broker, the society parasites, the comic and boisterous friend and his equally comic best girl. The comic friend (for novelty's sake, a radio broadcaster!) expounds the genial philosophy of bluff; the shipping-clerk tries it, at first with success, but with ultimate and obvious disaster. The light-headedness of his wife brings further complications, and a domestic tragedy is saved only by the timely interference of the soft-hearted employer. These are what the vaudevillians call "sure-fire stuff"; but as that means merely situations that are simple enough to have a wide appeal, there is no reason for discarding them disdainfully, especially when they are strung together with moderate skill.

Mr. Laurie, has, as able companions, Ray Walburn as the show-off radio man, Charles Dow Clark as the crotchety employer, and the reliable Joseph Kilgour as the Wall Street faker. The young wife is very well played by Mildred McLeod, who, as most people now know, can do extremely fine work when opportunity presents itself. But Ruth Donnelly as Elizabeth McCue, who has remained engaged to the radio star for nine long years, easily takes the second comedy honors.

Henry—Behave!

LAWRENCE LANGNER, one of the directors of the Theatre Guild, is the author of this farce-comedy in which Long Island real estate, ebullient youth, crusty middle-age, and partial amnesia are strung out together for three mildly amusing acts. An irate father gets hit over the head in a taxi accident, and promptly loses his memory for everything except his youth. He thinks and acts as he did at twenty, greatly to the delight of his son and prospective daughter-in-law, the chagrin of his mother-in-law and business associates, and the satisfaction of a wealthy "prospect" who had found the neighborhood too solemn until he met the rejuvenated president of the realty development corporation. A blow on the head by a policeman restores the lost memory and brings appropriate remorse, but not before the fortunate results above mentioned have been safely achieved.

Like so many ideas which seem captivatingly ingenious at first flash, the trouble with this one is largely in its handling, which is both crude and obvious. The father must get uproariously drunk in order to emphasize his restored youth. The amnesia incident itself is timed with mechanical precision to serve a three-act end, and much that might be accepted in straight farce fails to be convincing when strung somewhere between farce and comedy. The play is either not farcical enough or has too much farce, according to the end of the line from which you view it. John Cumberland as the father and Edward G. Robinson as his crusty associate act well—the others passably.

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BOOKS

Studies in Japanese Buddhism, by August Karl Reischauer. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Discovery of Japanese Idealism, by Kishio Satomi. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $4.25.

Before the Dawn, by Toyohiko Kagawa. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.50.

THESE three books give us, from different aspects, accounts of the religious condition of Japan. Dr. Reischauer is a Protestant minister and professor of ethics in the mission college of Meiji Gakuin, in the city of Tokio, and the volume under review consists of a course of lectures delivered at New York University under the Charles F. Deems foundation. The author beholds in Japan a country embarrassed with "isms," and likens it to a bewildered child listening to various voices and uncertain about which one to follow.

"Here is the meeting place of four great religions, viz.: Shinto, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity; not to mention other thought and life currents which have been pouring into this land from all parts of the world during the last fifty or sixty years."

Later on, however, we are informed that "Shinto was virtually incorporated into Buddhism about a thousand years ago," and that Confucianism never existed as an independent faith but was fostered by Buddhist leaders. The contending forces then are sifted down to two—Buddhism, and that Star of the East, first given to Nippon by Saint Francis Xavier, in 1542.

It is not within the scope of this work so much to subject Buddhism to criticism as to give the reader a far idea of its teachings, and to describe the different sects which exist side by side. It is a confusing picture for occidental eyes; but not more so, one fancies, than is the Christian picture to orientals. There are twelve sects, it appears, and as this number is adhered to strictly, readjustments are necessary as old sects die out and new ones come into existence. There are Buddhists who are modernists, and Buddhists who are fundamentalists; but always one must bear in mind that this northern, or Mahayana, branch of the faith is a radical departure from the southern, or main trunk—that it has spread its branches far, looked upward and dared speculate as to the hereafter—a metaphysical exercise forbidden to the faithful follower of Guatama. Also, that it has introduced the doctrine of salvation by grace of another, and ritualistically is ornate with bells, incense, and wreaths for the god's shrine. But it remains pessimistic at heart, and Dr. Reischauer points out the poor logic of those progressive thinkers who, looking forward to a glorious future for their country, would shed this pessimism and yet remain good Buddhists.

"Can it [Buddhism] lay hold on God, the Heavenly Father?" he asks. "No, it cannot, and at the same time remain true to its generic elements."

Discovery of Japanese Idealism is incoherent, badly written, and a sore trial upon the reader's patience; but it communicates a feeling of the Japanese soul. Kishio Satomi, race-proud and intensely national, presents those traditions and sentiments known ere Buddhism crossed the Korean channel.

It is a religion of the state which he extols, loyalty to a supreme sovereign who is inextricably bound with his subjects by an obligation to pursue a path of relentless duty. From this fixed principle radiate filial devotion, honor among friends, and gratitude held as a higher virtue than love, "whose condition is favoritism." A conventional pattern is this—but well ordered and proportioned, accounting perhaps for that curious and fascinating symmetry which prevails in Japanese art and decoration—the two figures squat upon the floor, with a tea-table between them; the perfect balance, the absence of confusion, of subtlety, light and shade.

But Mr. Satomi is not to be interpreted as a reactionary. He would revive and keep before his countrymen an ancient idealism, both because it is gracious and offers a contribution to the program for world peace. Patriotism for the subject, but righteousness for the state, is the simple code which in his regard would go a great way toward abolishing wars of aggression. He acknowledges no sectarian affiliations, and is free to criticize Buddhism as well as Christianity.

"In Buddhist pantheism, the conception of God is vast but disunited. If everything be a god, and if every man be a god, then practically there is no God. The future religion must unite monotheism and pantheism, and thus establish a one-god-centric pantheism."

The book is a mixture of the sublime and naïve—a combination one is tempted to call characteristically Japanese.

The hero of Before The Dawn, a realistic novel, is the better understood in the light of these two studies. Eiichi Niimi is an earnest young student at Meiji Gakuin, the institution at which Dr. Reischauer teaches. The story, as it unfolds, tells of his days there and at home, but chiefly of his work in the slums of Kobe following his conversion to Christianity. The matter, one takes it, is largely autobiographical, since the author, Toyohiko Kagawa, a graduate of the Princeton Theological Seminary and a resident of Kobe, has had, according to the preface, experiences similar to those narrated.

It is a very detailed and sincere account, crude and illogical at times—but always from the heart. Eiichi is a real person, and so are those with whom he comes in contact—students, derelicts, Geisha girls, his sister, his father and step-mother. Friendly controversy takes the place of religious rivalry; Buddhist and Christian hear each other's points of view. Eiichi is Buddhist by tradition, and given to melancholy and despair. It is only when he sees life as something joyous and worthwhile in itself, that he becomes a Christian. Converted to evangelicalism, he bends it to his soul's need and exalts it to a plane of lofty asceticism. He literally sells all, and goes to live among the poor.

Before The Dawn breaks down barriers and shatters the pattern of those two figures squat beside the tea-table. For it acquaints us with a life spiritually akin to our own. These people love and suffer, meet, or evade problems in a manner 'twere gratuitous to call oriental; and Eiichi might be the thoughtful young man of any race or clime who seeks to solve the riddle of the universe. This is not to say that the book lacks local color and that the reader does not often pause to exclaim, "how very Japanese!"; but that its universal qualities are the more striking.

LANDON M. ROBINSON.

Seventy Years a Showman, by "Lord" George Sanger. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

JOHN STEUART ERSKINE once said of his kinsman, Boswell, that he "had genius, but wanted ballast to counteract his whim. He preferred being a showman to keeping a shop of his own." The showman-instinct was equally strong in George Borrow—with himself as his chief exhibit—and,

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indeed, it is no rare tendency in human nature or in literature.

Messrs. Dent have lately reprinted "Lord" George Sanger's Seventy Years a Showman (first published in 1910) in which he aimed simply at recalling "the jingle of bells . . . the blare of music, and the sound of drums"; and giving to the world the story of a strange and adventurous life. But in doing this, he unconsciously revealed far more than his own experience in building up a great traveling circus and menagerie, and a European reputation. In his pages we find the social history of the years 1833-1905, and all the changes they have witnessed, told in the simple, vivid style of one who was educated, not in schools, but by life on the open road. If George Sanger's talents had taken the direction of fiction, Dickens would have had a powerful rival, for Sanger lived in a bizarre world of freaks and mummers, and he never lacked the humor to observe it, nor did he lack the humanity to share all its interests.

George Sanger came of Wiltshire yeoman stock. His father, James Sanger, had been seized by a press-gang while on a holiday in London, at the age of eighteen; and after serving on the Agincourt and Pompey, he was transferred to the Victory, fought in the battle of Trafalgar, and was severely wounded.

"On the return of the fleet, he was paid off at Deal with other invalids, and received the magnificent pension of £10 a year from his grateful country."

At Bristol fair, he first practised the conjuring tricks which he had learned from two fellow-sailors, and here he bought and fitted up a small peep-show, with "some movable and very gaudy pictures, and having six peep-holes fitted with fairly strong lenses." James Sanger would "patter" most effectively about the battle of Trafalgar while the public gazed at scenes of the fight in his little show.

"In his white smock-frock, beaver hat, knee-breeches, with worsted stockings and low-buckled shoes—a costume he never varied till the day of his death—the tall, handsome, well-set-up young fellow attracted much attention in the fair then held in the churchyard, which now forms what is the Haymarket, Bristol."

On this occasion he met a friend of his childhood; soon after, she became his wife and "the dearest and kindest of mothers" to ten children of whom George was the sixth. Part of every year was spent in a caravan, traveling from fair to fair with an improved peep-show and a rudimentary sort of round-about, contrived by James Sanger.

The boy's earliest memories were of rough and lawless times, and often of great poverty and hardship. It was the England of Cobbett's Rural Rides, or of Crabbe's studies—rather than the idyllic scenes of Miss Mitford's village that he saw in those days. He could recall fierce fights, and the meting out of "showman's law" to the brutal ringleaders of an attack on their property at Lansdown Fair.

The showman's family were at Newport, Monmouthshire, when warning reached them of the great demonstration to be made by 30,000 Chartist miners, on the Whitsuntide fair day. As the caravans were in flight on the road, they saw the colliers pouring back in panic and disorder from the town, where they had been routed in their attack on the old coaching-house by a party of twenty-four soldiers who were stationed inside.

In George Sanger's youth, the country people were always ready to believe that show-folk were little better than criminals, and even to regard them as in league with the devil. In the 'fifties, when he took his own panorama (with views of the Duke of Wellington's funeral and of the Ross Arctic expedition) and conjuring show to Scotland for the first time, "conjuring was looked upon as a very wicked business indeed . . . In some villages we were informed that the minister had heard of our coming and had made special prayer in the kirk that rain might spoil our show if we ventured to open it."

Nevertheless, this simple, kindly man, with his ingenuity and indomitable pluck, won hs way everywhere before he decided that the time had come to rest. In going over the events of his long, active life, he takes us into the secrets of his most impressive effects. He confesses how the "Learned Pig" was trained, and the "Tame Oyster who smoked a Pipe"; how the "Pig-faced Lady," and the much-admired "White Elephant" were produced; how he secured buck-jumping horses, Ojibbeway Indians, and the "faked" sensation of a pack of wild wolves which raised a question in Parliament. His "traveling establishment" visited almost every European country, and brought him into the most varied society. He lived to see Abraham Lincoln; to welcome "Dizzy" (on his way back from concluding the Berlin Treaty in 1878) at Verviers station with a display of flags and the national anthem played by the circus band; and to parade his show in the courtyard of Windsor Castle before the Queen in 1899.

Sanger's story has been almost unobtainable for some years, but this reprint will make an enthralling commentary for children on nineteenth-century affairs. Nor will older readers be able to resist its vivid chronicle of struggle and achievement; of other days and customs; of the dangers, joys, and sorrows of a life spent "i' the common show-place, where they exercise."

MURIEL KENT.

A Thousand and One Nights of Opera, by Frederick H. Martens. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $3.50.

Alice in Orchestralia, by Ernest La Prade. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. $1.00.

IT is fitting that the most industrious pen of music-journalism should give to the world its latest "opera guide." Not that there was need of one: for, since the advent of Wagner and the pivotal position in music he secured for a time to this illegitimate form, there has been a veritable plethora of guides and Perfect Wagnerites.

But A Thousand and One Nights of Opera has that quality of lavishness so felicitously implied by the title, and this truly enormous task has been here carried out with so well-tempered a style that any reviewer's impertinence in putting the author "on the carpet" would be thrown into painful relief by Mr. Martens's very generosity. And, lest this appear too ambiguous a recommendation, it should be acknowledged forthwith that this tome of four hundred and forty-one finely printed pages sets a record for condensation and amplitude—not a thousand and one, but two thousand and four—by actual count of the index of operas!

In the arrangement of this bewildering mass of material, Mr. Martens employs the unconventional process of national classification with regard to the locality of the action rather than of the composer. Thus, the Russian Stravinsky's Le Rossignol, and the Austrian Richard Strauss's Salome, are discussed in the opening chapter, The Orient—despite the fact that both are creations of this century. The historical sequence is continued down to communistic Russia and George Gershwin's "One Hundred and Thirty-fifth Street." The pageant

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presents an attractive complexion for the layman, while it does not obviously affect the book's value to the scribe.

As "the tale's the thing" in opera, a swift synopsis of the libretto has been provided in each instance, along with mention of its principal arias, and its overture, entr'actes, and incidental dances, if any. Of course, it has not been necessary to outline 2,000 plots, as many of the operas are built around similar stories, with a revamped libretto. For instance, there are a baker's dozen operas associated with Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet; and as many for Hamlet. Don Quixote has defeated seven composers. And so on.

While the purpose of this book is to present a summarized exposition of the "book of the opera" and its outstanding tunes, Mr. Martens occasionally essays a pithy critical estimate, in which direction his risible sense of humor does him excellent service—especially in the several pages dealing with post-war operas, for he leaves his reader in no doubt of the incessant monotony of les jeunes' musical commentaries on the monotony of life. Too bad those two second-handed Parisians, George Antheil of Trenton, and Ezra Pound, had not finished their works last year, when this book evidently went to press.

It was a happy fancy that inspired the conception and guided the realization of Alice in Orchestralia. This little volume, as novel as it is comely, is designed to instruct the rising generation in the mechanical and emotional functions of the modern symphony orchestra, and it discharges its pretty task with true grace and occasional whimsy.

Alice occupies a box with her mother at a symphony concert, where she is lulled into dreaminess and "awakes" to find herself skipping through a long brass tunnel—the brass coils of the tuba, the instrument which "reared its enormous funnel-shaped mouth almost underneath Alice's seat." Soon she finds herself in the village of Fiddladelphia, "the capital of Orchestralia," where lives the string family: violins, violas, 'cellos, and bass viols. Each in turn tells Alice of its history and capabilities, and, with charming candor, of its very important position in the present-day orchestra. Alice next visits Panoplis, where she profitably enjoys her time with the members of the wood-wind family; and, before attending a concert in Fiddladelphia, she goes to Brassydale, home of the brass instruments, who later take her to inspect Orchestralia's artillery —the percussion instruments.

With this knowledge, the concert opens up innumerable facets of interest and offers two-fold enjoyment. At the conclusion of the concert, she is roused from her reveries by her mother, to perceive that she has been attending a sort of concert within a concert. But knowledge is hardly less valuable because divined in a dream.

The author, Ernest La Prade, is a member of the string-section of Walter Damrosch's New York Symphony Orchestra, whose programs he has admirably annotated for many years.

WALTER V. ANDERSON.

The Golden Dancer, by Cyril Hume. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.00.

EVEN in the old-fashioned, hackneyed novels where the heroes rise to easy fame, there is no more comet-like example of one than Al Wells, the hero of this tale. He is an ex-factory hand who establishes a soda-fountain that flourishes beyond belief; he is driven out of the village by the good folk who believe in Puritanical reform, and he finally wins the girl that he loves. One could find the germ of this plot in

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thousands of novels of the Down East type. The author does not even do without the eternally seduced young maiden who refuses to divulge the name of the father of her child.

None of the people in this book are convincing, this being especially true of Al Wells. He seems to be a vain, selfish creature who is at heart a perfect fool. Not once does this straw man come to life, and one feels that he is an absolute nonentity. When Mr. Hume tries to create some sympathy for him by his sudden fall from prosperity, he fails completely. One is inclined to think Al Wells had success already far beyond his meriting.

In some passages, Mr. Hume is a veritable Gilles de Rais, the only difference being that the latter delighted in destroying helpless babies, while Mr. Hume achieves the same experience vicariously, by destroying helpless animals. One is regaled for nearly forty pages with the unnecessary conversation of the hero careening around the country with a depraved truck-driver. Conversation that runs to the level of the following:

"Woodchuck," said the truck-driver, without moving his smiling lips . . . "Oftentimes I get 'em with the bus."

"No!" said the traveler.

"Oftentimes," the truck-driver repeated firmly. "Tor-toyses too. It gives me the heebies though, to get a tor-toyse. They sort of pop when you get one. Sort of crackle. . . . "

" . . . I mean," the traveler explained, "would tor-toyses ever screech out any if you hit one? Like a cat might?"

"This bus is too slow for cats," said the truck-driver. "Takes a speedy bus for a cat . . . Fack is though, one night I did get a yowl."

And so on, ad infinitum. Mr. Hume, in some portions of the book, makes deliberate use of obscenity to obtain certain effects. Scenes that he does not dare allow any human eye to see he gives us through the eyes and mind (I doubt if it has one) of a watchful owl. An original idea but hardly, in this case, handled with anything but studied crudity.

If pages of soda-fountain advertisements and sentences composed of one swear-word after another, constitute good literature, then all the literary critics had better resign their jobs at once. Anyway, there are too many sodas in this book for consummation even in this hot weather.

ROBERT INNES CENTER.

is 5, by E. E. Cummings. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50

"THEY produce pictures which suggest the handiwork of a very unpleasant child, and 'free verse' which can be distinguished from sloppy prose, because it is cut up into uneven lengths. One of them finds something suggestive of mediaeval tyranny in stops and capital letters, and prints his verses without them; others have different tricks, all equally absurd."

We have no means of knowing exactly what "poetry" lay in the gloomy mind of Dean Inge when he penned this paragraph two years ago. But it will serve as a pretty good estimate of the new macaronism of which Mr. E. E. Cummings is so eminent an exponent. Mr. Walter Pach, on his manual on the Newest Art, has told us that in all fairness, criticism of it should be left to the generation whose visual perceptions it is training. Perhaps a generation is on its way which, in another field, will understand the true inwardness of Mr. Cummings's technique. This unconceived critic may appreciate, as we cannot, the exquisite significance of a lonely and reversed bracket looking for its mate, and of majuscules deposed from their accustomed dignity and strap-hanging in a row of "lower case." He may even waste a few moments trying to recapture that first rapture which the sight of words in print, usually left to dirty-minded little boys, once gave his unemancipated ancestors. He will be in possession of a syntax which can make something out of the following besides just plain tommyrot:

"in the, exquisite;
"morning sure lyHer eye s exactly sit,ata little roundtable
"among otherlittle roundtables Her,eyes count slow(ly
"obstre poroustimidi ties surElyfl)oat iNg,the
"ofpiecesofof sunligh tof fa l l in gof throughof treesOf."

A poem which is the concluding trick in Mr. Cummings's slim cabinet of prestidigitations does more than let us breathe once before the lid is closed. It rather gives the game of the whole "refracted" school of poetry away. For, though it is a fine sonnet, slightly mannered and intricate, it is safe to say that our literary and near-literary reviews accept and reject several dozens, not one whit worse and not one whit better than it, every month and week.

H. L. S.

Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship, by William Temple, Bishop of Manchester. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. $1.00.

The Equipment of the Social Worker, by Elizabeth Macadam. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

The Riddle of Society, by Charles Platt. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.00.

BOOKS dealing with the problem of social salvage increase in number. For his part, the Anglican Bishop of Manchester appends to a lucid presentation of the meaning of Christian belief a few brave chapters concerned with practical religious and moral problems. Despite some interesting solecisms, the book deserves reading. It is tremendously in earnest, and it addresses itself to the average man without breaking its back. Miss Macadam's volume is largely a compilation, by a conscientious British student, of what are the goals and agencies of modern social welfare work. The chapter devoted to education and training in the United States is far from complete, but the information it supplies will prove useful. Those interested in the subject will find Miss Macadam a stimulant as well as a guide. She realizes fully the importance of salvaging human waste, and she makes the case for trained workers in an impressive and often brilliant fashion. Dr. Platt's sprightly and well-informed treatise is relatively ambitious. It terms itself "a contribution to the understanding of those who do wrong," and attempts to outline a complete redemptive social philosophy. Sprinkled as it is with quotations from Carlyle and a hundred other people, it evidences the human sources from which the author derives his opinions. He feels that the "normal" in human nature is what should always engross the student, and that toward the development of this, rather than toward the elimination of the abnormal, will be the march of science. The note of optimism implied is refreshing, even when it fails to convince. One regrets that occasional balderdash—anent the subject of early Christian charity, for instance—should mar a book which gives expression to much that is the wisely gathered fruit of experience.

T. C.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"Well, I think Angelica might have spared me this," grumbled Doctor Angelicus going over his Monday morning mail as he smoked the large cigar he calls his eye-opener. Miss Brynmarian, leaning over his shoulder, saw that he was examining a picture postcard with an Italian stamp, showing the Tower of Pisa bent down to a very dangerous angle.

"Oh, how charming, Doctor!" she exclaimed. "Your niece must be having a wonderful trip; those views of Vesuvius in eruption, the Temple of Paestum, the colored card from the Blue Grotto—they were all lovely!"

"But Angelica knows I have seen all these things; her cousins and aunts have for years exhausted the post-office with these snatch-cards of scenery, architecture, and girls dancing the Tarentella beside inconceivably blue seas and mountains frosted like wedding-cake! No, Angelica must be quite distraught; her letters, formerly the sweet school-girl prattlings about Sister Mary and Mother Basil, the saints' feasts and the nativity plays, now read like Baedecker's guide-books of north, central and southern Italy.

"The very style is translated from the German, and the sentiment smacks of the fish-course in a Swiss-Italian hotel—all lemon juice and finocchio. O Angelica! That I should have devoted so much of my thought to the formation of your character as a true and noble woman like your Aunt Isabel! If she should come back from our family plot, and with her grave, sweet eyes could gaze upon you now, in your chiffon French nude stockings, your boyish bob and the wild dangle about your neck of Naples corals and Roman pearls, bracelets from Sicily, cameos from Capri and vermilion earrings from Florence—what would Aunt Isabel say? Alas! That lipstick on the pearly mouth that recited the valedictory and debated on Dante and Francis Thompson those last years in convent halls!"

The Doctor paused a second for breath, and then continued: "You might, indeed, have yielded this outward service to fashion and the world but, cruel girl, how could you so far forget yourself and the ties of consanguinity as to send your loving old uncle—publicly, through the mails—this crowning irreverence, this flout at his dignity in literature and all the numerous other arts in which—I say it modestly—he has shone so long? How could you send that postcard of the Leaning Tower of Pisa?"

"But, Doctor," said Miss Brynmarian, "don't you think it is a beautiful reminder of old Italy—very likely the souvenir of a day of girlish happiness? You should allow for the young people. They have not realized that you may have received hundreds of these Leaning Towers in your lifetime; and gazing upon it for the first time, they may even imagine that you might find it worthy to display on your desk!"

"My desk, my desk, young lady! Look about, and what do you find there? A portrait of our revered George Washington, the newly discovered Dante portrait, and a picture of General Primo de Rivera. Could anything be simpler or in better taste? Had she sent me (she will, I know, when she reaches Paris) a picture of the Venus de Milo—had she sent me a view of Michelangelo's Last Judgment, or the Torso of the Vatican—I should be more ardent in my public approval of the course she has received at Saint Euphrennia's College. There would be no complaining letters from me in our correspondence columns regarding culture and scholarship; nor a

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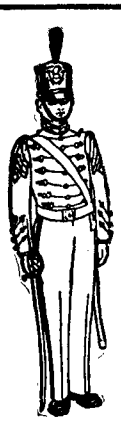

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word upon the lessons on the harp, the copying of old masters, and such other things as have really troubled me for years during Angelica's formative period."

"Really, Doctor, you should not take the Leaning Tower so hardly," said Primus Criticus. "What would you do if your niece sent you views of the handsome drawing-rooms of the Hotel de Vesuve, or the new lift of the Quirinal—views of the underground restaurants of the Adria, or the old bridge across the Arno? Wait till she reaches Venice and Como—then will come those colored cards that are so well printed in Germany. You will have tortoise-shell cigarette cases, leather frames and purses, patent cigar-lighters and silk stockings from Paris—and the usual heavy muffler and woolen socks from London. Your heart will gradually soften to your sweet little niece, and all will be forgiven, I am sure. She is only in the tourist maelstrom, and is showing fatigue."

"Youth is hard, indeed, my friends," replied the Doctor, "but if you had been subjected to the intensive course of her letters on Cimabue, Giotto, Giovanni Bologuese, Fra Angelico and Botticelli, you would cry, with me: 'Enough, O Youth; spare me, I am middle-aged!' "

"But tell me, truly, Doctor," asked Miss Anonymoncule, "don't you prefer Botticelli to the Archipenko school? Don't you think Morales el Divino preferable to the pre-Raphaelites?"

"You raise a serious question, my dear, and it suggests a paper that I have been meditating for some time. Shall we reveal the human form as it really is, or take an average model, stretch his neck a foot longer than nature, give him hands like bird-claws, twist his legs with the muscles of a mastadon, and fix a flaming wig on his head, and call him an angel after El Greco? There are reasons pro and contra that call for profound considerations—but see, my dear—I have smoked up my eye-opener and here are the Monday morning poets and the Dante scholars awaiting my attention. Tittivillus, put the bars on the outer doors. Laboramus igitur.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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